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The USA Press And Fidel Castro

Last Monday The Virginian-Pilot published a report of a talk at the All-Citizens Forum at the Norfolk Division of Virginia State College by William Worthy, a newspaper reporter and former television reporter with much experience in foreign countries. Mr. Worthy has recently been in Cuba. He has a high opinion of Premier Castro and, indeed, of the Cuban revolution in general.

Premier Castro is, said Mr. Worthy, "one of the great figures of the 20th Century." He himself had never before been so "boasted over" by a political personality. The revolution he called "most remarkable." It is being "carefully studied in Latin America," he said. "the handwriting on the wall is very clear. If Cuba gets away with her revolution, the other 19 Latin American countries will soon follow suit."

There was a good deal more, all of which qualified as news and was published as such. It included some sharp criticism of the role of the American government, especially of the Central Intelligence Agency, as being responsible for "the disharmony of the two countries." Mr. Worthy has a low opinion of Allen Dulles of the CIA and said so.

But in the end we note this paragraph in the report of the talk by Mr. Worthy:

Criticizing the American press, Worthy said, "There is a line in this country like the political party line. Reporters know which side their bread is buttered on and they write accordingly."

It is an imperfect world, and perhaps here and there, among many thousands, some reporter did assume what Mr. Worthy says reporters — implying a great many, if not all did. But the main implication of the passage we have quoted is the bunk.

We don't accept Mr. Worthy's interpretation of contemporary Cuban history, yet he didn't have any trouble getting his views into

this newspaper. The nature of the Fidel Castro movement in Cuba is debated frequently in the American press. It has been the subject of fiercely controversial articles in reputable magazines. It has been argued about with much vigor before editors' meetings and reported in newspapers. A vast amount of the Fidel Castro group's own ideas, interpretations, contentions, and denunciations of the United States — and, we might add, falsehoods about this country has been printed in the American press. Mr. Worthy is talking bunk.